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РАСКАТОВА Алина Андреевна

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Научный руководитель:
профессор, кафедра американских исследований,
д.и.н., Цветкова Наталья Александровна

Рецензент:
Заместитель редактора,
Закрытое акционерное общество
«Межгосударственная телерадиокомпания «Мир»
Хохлов Алексей Рэдович

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Introduction

Relevance

More than 900,000 new users appear on the Internet every day¹. Digitalization emphasizes almost all spheres of human life nowadays, including foreign policy and international relations. In this regard, the study of digital diplomacy is relevant, as it allows us to identify the features of the "new" diplomatic activity. In addition, the relevance of this study is determined by the following factors:

Firstly, digital technologies allow an increasing number of different actors to participate in the political and diplomatic process. This leads to universal involvement, on the one hand, and to the expansion of the "list of contacts". New and influential gamblers are emerging online, both within national borders and in the international arena. Such entities are capable of not only directly or indirectly contributing to the strengthening of the reputation of another state in the global space, but also seriously spoil it.

Secondly, digital technologies have increased the ability of non-state actors to participate in debates due to live broadcasts, comments, private messages. The transparency of diplomacy is definitely an advantage, but it makes society more vulnerable to political control.

Thirdly, digital technologies are accelerating the dissemination of information. This has increased the amount of information available to the public. But the question of whether it is manageable, trustworthy or safe is on the international affairs agenda, which proves the relevance of this study today.

Essence

The essence of scientific research is the active dissemination of social networks and the study of their impact on diplomatic activities.

¹ DIGITAL AROUND THE WORLD // Datareportal web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://datareportal.com/global-digital-overview>

The **object** of this study is diplomatic activity from 2009 to the end of 2020.

The **subject** of the research is digitalization as a new stage in the formation of diplomatic activity.

The **aim** of the scientific work is to identify the features of diplomacy in the digital age.

Based on this aim, we have identified the following **objectives**:

- 1) to explore the origins of digital diplomacy using the example of Twiplomacy;
- 2) to identify the features of the new institutional conduction of diplomatic activity in social networks;
- 3) to reveal the essence of the personal accounts of diplomats in social networks, whether the information there is official and confirmed.

The **chronological framework** of the work covers the period from 2009 to the end of 2020. 2009 serves as the starting point for Obama's accession to the presidency of the United States. His Twitter immediately began to gain hundreds of subscribers, and a little later he became the most read in the world on this social network. Then, a year later, Instagram appears. In addition, Joseph Nye's two concepts of "soft power" and the "concept of engagement" prevailed at this time. These two concepts have played a significant role in the development of digital diplomacy. At the same time, the term «datafication» of international relations appeared.

The **source base** of the research consists of:

Materials related to digital diplomacy. This group includes the following sources: web pages of the diplomatic departments of Russia, the United States, Europe, Asia, Africa, accounts of the same departments in social networks Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, V Kontakte, accounts of diplomatic figures in the same social

networks. These sources show the scale of the spread of digitalization of international relations today and its impact on the audience.

The **historiography** of the issue includes a corpus of scientific works of Russian and foreign researchers devoted to the analysis of digital diplomacy. The first part of our historiographic analysis presents an analysis of the works of experts from the Russian school digital diplomacy, and the second part - the foreign one.

Russian sources

A huge contribution to the Russian historiography of digital diplomacy was made by N.A. Tsvetkova, G.O. Yarygin, I. V. Surma, D.N. Baryshnikova, M.S. Baglikova, L.G. Vikulova, who paid attention to the basics of digitalization in international relations, theory, research methods, the reasons for the emergence and future activation.

The next group of scientists have compiled works on social networks, such a phenomenon as Twiplomacy. Among them B.A. Golovan, M.S. Baglikova, N.A. Kuklish, A.A. Torrealba. Twiplomacy is a completely new round of diplomatic activity, which began in 2011, but already has its own website with numerous statistics. The research of the above scientists is a valuable source of information and a "guide" to the world of Twiplomacy today.

In conclusion, it should be noted that the field of digital diplomacy plays the great role in Russian scholars' research works. In addition, more and more experts are beginning to consider this phenomenon, and every day the doctrine of the digitalization of diplomacy is spreading.

Foreign sources

Speaking about foreign researchers, especially American ones, great attention is paid here to the initial steps of digitalization in diplomacy. The philosophical foundations of digital diplomacy are laid out in the writings of Anne-Mary

Slaughter, who served as Director of Policy Planning at the US Department of State in 2009-2011. In 2019, I. Manor released the great work «Digitalization of Public Diplomacy», which describes how digitalization has influenced institutions, practitioners and audiences of diplomacy.

Also, an undeniable contribution to the historiography of digital diplomacy was made by B.Verrekia, J.Pamment, C. Bjola. These authors have graphically described the changes in diplomacy in the digital age, but the works contain more theoretical data than practical data.

Summarizing Russian and foreign sources, we can conclude that the topic is indeed at the stage of active study. The difference lies in the fact that a theoretical background is traced in foreign practice, while the scientific works of Russian experts take into account practical cases of the spread of digital diplomacy and its impact on the international arena.

Research methodology.

During the research we used the following methods: social-media analysis, case-study analysis, content analysis, limitation method.

As for the social-media analysis, it helps to analyze such social networks as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and study such a phenomenon as Twiplomacy. Social media analysis allows us to collect data on the number of hashtags on a specific topic, trace the characteristics and behavior of a specific user, study location-based interactions. Social media analysis is one of the main methods of this research, which allows to achieve the main goal of master thesis.

As a rule, a specific event is taken as the basis for a case-study. This research is filled with this kind of method, especially the third chapter. In the last part of scientific work, I look at the personal digital diplomacy of specific diplomats. It is logical that it is physically impossible to take into account every diplomat of every state, that is why were considered examples of the most prominent of them, such as Michael McFaul and Maria Zakharova. Highlight

specific cases with specific personalities and analyzing information within the framework of the given cases was made by case-study analysis.

Content analysis is a method that allows to classify posts, stories, tweets, posts in communities in social networks. This method helps to consider the content submitted by diplomatic agencies or leaders as part of a scientific study. To analyze the specific manner of the presentation of information, what reaction this information evokes from readers (comments and likes), what decisions it leads to.

Due to the limitation method, in this research were singled out only the brightest and most significant diplomats who have proven themselves on social networks.

Structure of the work: the research consists of an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, a list of primary and secondary sources.

Chapter I. The phenomenon of Twiplomacy in the digital age

1.1 The basics of Twitter becoming one of the main social networks of digital diplomacy.

Social networks are media for the rapid dissemination of information. In recent decades, they have become an important part of almost every area of human life: they have changed the form of communication, our habits. Diplomacy is not an exception. We can see an increase in the proliferation of accounts of diplomats and diplomatic departments, which has completely changed the way of diplomacy conduction recently.

One of the most popular and widespread social networks is Twitter. It is one of the main sources of big data about the interaction of people in various events. This social network was launched in 2006 and to this day it is an excellent platform for short, but sometimes very capacious messages. User is given 280 characters in order to convey his message to followers.

What is especially important for the current situation, Twitter has become one of the tools of diplomacy. Diplomats and foreign ministries of almost every state, already for granted, have their own official accounts on this social network and cover current news reports on the international agenda. According to UN official Twitter account, 97% of the leaders of 193 UN states have accounts on Twitter and other social networks².

Of course, using social networks and Twitter as well, diplomats have a huge impact on the audience, on its mood and attitude towards certain events. The diplomat needs to think over the content to be submitted in advance, to be able to use the digital platform to accomplish the tasks already set.

Representatives of diplomatic departments can influence the opinions of their readers through any social networks and media, however, why is Twitter

² UN official Twitter account in Russia (@UnitedNationsRU) Tweeter post: October, 6 2018 [Electronic resource]. - URL:<https://twitter.com/UnitedNationsRU/status/1048619393578618881> Date of the application: 12.10.2020

given so much attention and why does it have a key role in the dissemination of digital diplomacy?

The answer is that Twitter is a huge public database with many opportunities for researchers. This social network has an open application programming interface, which allows users to track not only the text, but also the number of subscribers of the account holder, language, geographic location, and so on. In addition, using special programs such as Netlyric or SocioViz, not only an experienced programmer, but also a person who does not belong to this profession can investigate a request of interest on Twitter³.

Since 2007 Twitter developers have greatly improved this social network, which has become a bright flash in the modern world. Twitter has become a tool for commenting on events that take place online, for exchanging views and conducting interviews, as was the case with John McCain, the former US presidential candidate in 2008. In addition, later it became possible to create certain communities in which people with similar points of view could unite to discuss topics of interest with each other, and also to stay in contact with people who are significant to them: politicians, prime ministers, diplomats, etc. Unfortunately, this was an «excellent» opportunity to mobilize various protest groups. For example, the Egyptian revolution of 2011-2013, protests in the elections in Iran and Moldova in 2009, protests of Jewish students in France in 2012, actions against corruption in Turkey in 2014, actions due to the coup in Ukraine in 2013-2014, protests in Venezuela in 2014. All these actions were planned and distributed precisely through Tweeter.

As a result, the governments of China, North Korea, Iran and Egypt have blocked this social network in order to maintain order. This still proves once again that Twitter is a great vehicle for creating political events, and this is extremely important when it comes to creating an international network.

³ N.A.Tsvetkova. Феномен цифровой дипломатии в международных отношениях и методология его изучения [The phenomenon of digital diplomacy in international relations and the methodology of its study] // Vestnik RGGU. Series "Political Science. History. International relationships". 2020. No 2. С. 37–47. DOI: 10.28995/2073-6339-2020-2-37-47 [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/fenomen-tsifrovoy-diplomatii-v-mezhdunarodnyh-otnosheniyah-i-metodologiya-ego-izucheniya>
Date of the application: 4.04.2021

Politicians, diplomats, heads of state began sharply create personal Twitter accounts: Barack Obama became a page in 2009, followed by Hugo Chavez, Alvaro Uribe, Christina Kirchner, Dmitrii Medvedev and others. The American Ambassador to Russia, Michael E. McFall, began to actively maintain his Twitter account in 2011, from the moment of his appointment to the post. Regular tweeting helped his audience understand how the US foreign policy towards Russia was built. Representatives of different states began to communicate with each other via Twitter, as a result of which the term Twiplomacy appeared. This term was coined by Matthias Lufkens in 2011, a pioneer in the study of social media diplomacy, who presented the results of an analysis on the use of Twitter by heads of state, according to which the social network provides wide opportunities for diplomatic interaction and the settlement of individual conflicts⁴.

Like any revolutionary phenomenon, the emergence of Twiplomacy caused a lot of controversy, both in positive and negative terms. For example, the former Israeli Ambassador to the United States, Michael Oren, said that Twiplomacy is an excellent opportunity for communication between representatives of different countries without the control of Ministries: "Twitter is another tool that helps me communicate with other diplomats and journalists, and also allows me to add an individual touch to my political interests.»⁵

Other example is Alec Ross, the chief technical guru of the State Department during the Clinton era, spoke out sharply, saying that Twiplomacy could even be counterproductive and could have negative consequences. Digitalization "can destroy cities"⁶ like a nuclear weapon. Several cases can be cited as an example: Argentina, Chile and the UK were close to breaking off relations in 2012 when the British Ambassador to Chile, John Benjamin, posted a tweet in which he ridiculed

⁴ M. Lufkens (2014) Twiplomacy Study 2014 // Twiplomacy web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://twiplomacy.com/blog/twiplomacy-study-2014/> Date of the application: 15.10.2020

⁵ M. Tracy. Israeli Ambassador Michael Oren Talks About Why He Joined Twitter // The Tablet web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://www.tabletmag.com/sections/news/articles/ambassadororen-on-why-he-joined-twitter> Date of the application: 15.10.2020

⁶ Alec Ross (2016) Industries of the Future [TEDx Talks channel] // Youtube [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TuE6J5Y4Yek> Date of the application: 8.11.2020

Argentina, citing its attempts to reclaim the Falkland Islands. Another example is the tensions in relations between the United States and Russia over the Crimean issue, then John Kerry and Sergey Lavrov expressed their opposite opinions using the hashtag #UnitedforUkraine⁷.

The figure that has changed a lot in Twiplomacy is Donald Trump. Instead of the pre-existing soft power on Twitter, the former US president brought in what is called hard power. This is the first experience of this kind of force in digital diplomacy. He often spoke extremely rudely and even offensively in relation to other states, which negatively affected the image of his person and the United States as a whole. However, this kind of experience did not turn negative, on the contrary, due to his openness and emotionality, Trump managed to force many politicians and diplomats to follow the same Twiplomacy style. This "Trump effect" we can call «rebattle», when one poignant political statement overlaps another, leading to a controversy in social.

Trump's emotionality and openness led him to block Twitter because of the publication of posts in which he called his defeat in the presidential election "theft of votes", although this was his personal opinion and there was no evidence of this. Because of these statements the riots on the Capitol Hill took place on January 6, 2021. Soon, the ex-president's account was permanently deleted so as not to provoke new outbreaks of protests.

Twitter for diplomats is now part of the job, their "remote office". For example, Samantha Power, the US Permanent ex-Representative to the UN, often allows herself to escape from the twists and turns in the Security Council and take her smartphone. At this point, she states about what is happening in the hall of the Security Council: "This dynamic is especially noticeable if the diplomat tweets directly from the meeting. This shows how quickly things are changing. After all,

⁷ #UnitedforUkraine: Supporting Ukraine's Future // Huffpost web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: https://www.huffpost.com/entry/unitedforukraine-supporti_b_5385135 Date of the application: 21.10.2020

now any citizen can follow what the representative of his country is doing at the UN”⁸.

Adam Snyder of the Berson-Marsteller think tank says that today, tweets for diplomats carry as much weight as statements they make from the rostrum of the General Assembly or from the seat of a member of the Security Council: “It happens that statements may not be liked by a certain group of people, or someone will see them as an attempt to put pressure on public opinion. It is clear that a tweet cannot start a conflict, but a controversy on Twitter must be avoided, because the endless exchange of arguments in the social sphere does not look very solid. Twitter should be used not as an Internet weapon, but as a constructive tool for disseminating information.»⁹

It is quite indicative that the pages of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation occupy leading positions in the ratings of the Twiplomacy project. A Twitter account in Russian (1.2 million subscribers) ranks 29th in the 50 Most Active World Leaders nomination and 47th in the 50 Most Connected World Leaders nomination¹⁰. The English-language page (194 thousand subscribers) ranks third in the same category.

The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is also an active participant in the "new diplomacy"; numerous diplomats and permanent representatives have their own accounts. It is worth noting that the Ministry's official Twitter accounts also include pages belonging to the Russian Ambassador to Great Britain A. Yakovenko (24 thousand readers), the Russian Ambassador to Serbia A. Chepurin (3.2 thousand readers), the First Deputy Permanent Representative Russia under the UN D. Polyansky (11 thousand readers). The service also presents the Historical and Documentary Department (5.2 thousand readers), the Department of the Situational

⁸ Зачем нужна «цифровая дипломатия» в Твиттере? [Why you need "digital diplomacy" on Twitter?] // UN news web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://news.un.org/ru/audio/2015/02/1026561> Date of the application: 21.10.2020

⁹ Twiplomacy Gets Its Day In the Sun at U.N. // Inter Press Service web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <http://www.ipsnews.net/2015/02/twiplomacy-gets-its-day-in-the-sun-at-u-n/> Date of the application: 21.10.2020

¹⁰ The 50 most followed world leaders // Twiplomacy web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://twiplomacy.com/ranking/the-50-most-followed-world-leaders-on-twitter/> Date of the application: 19.10.2020

Crisis Center (4.3 thousand readers), the First Department of the CIS countries (0.3 thousand readers), the press center of the Information Department and press (0.6 thousand readers), a separate profile is devoted to Russia's participation in the Barents cooperation (0.5 thousand readers). The authenticity of the pages was verified by the Twitter administration using a special character next to the username and the Russian Foreign Ministry using a link on the official website of the department. Facebook accounts of the Russian Ambassador to Australia G. Logvinov (0.2 thousand readers), the Consul General of Russia in Gothenburg (Sweden) A. Fedorova (0.3 thousand readers), the Consular Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry (6.1 thousand. readers), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (30.1 thousand readers).

Of course, clashes of opinions about Twiplomacy continue to this day. Some consider this a new round of modern and future diplomacy, while others are confident that digitalization in international relations will lead to collapse. However, we can say with full confidence that diplomacy has undergone obvious changes, a "revolution", it would not be the same. The fact that people can find out the news of international relations instantly from the first hand, openly discuss and convey their opinion to the masses and watch live online meetings of diplomats, politicians and heads of state cannot leave us indifferent.

Thus, the advent of Twitter and the digital science of Twiplomacy has improved the understanding of a new kind of diplomacy. Absolutely every user today can receive official information from diplomatic departments directly, bypassing the media, and, moreover, with maximum speed. This makes diplomacy transparent, each user can comment on certain events in the diplomatic arena.

Today the concept of Twiplomacy includes not only Twitter, but also other social networks. Thus, it is possible to track statistics in the field of international relations in all social networks. It is worth mentioning that Twitter immediately became popular among diplomatic representatives, which changed the system of diplomacy as much as possible.

Like anything new, Twiplomacy has sparked a lot of expert debate over the value of digital diplomacy. Scientists have split into two camps, presenting their

arguments in their works regarding the advantages and disadvantages of the new diplomacy.

Experts judge the pros and cons of digitalization in the field of international relations based on personal observations. Some see this as salvation, maximum openness of diplomacy, one of the important stages of globalization, while other experts believe that the vigorous activity of diplomatic representatives and their subscribers can cause riots, revolutions, since users can easily unite into communities against the background of news. issued by diplomats. And it's all online. The fear of cyberattacks and cyber terrorism also does not leave them alone. In any case, this is our reality and we need to adapt to it. We will discuss the advantages and disadvantages of Twiplomacy in more detail in the next paragraph.

1.2 Advantages and disadvantages of Twiplomacy.

Since the development and formation of a new format of diplomacy - Twiplomacy - scientists and analysts have identified the advantages and disadvantages of using the Twitter social network in the format of international political discourse.

The advantages of Twiplomacy, firstly, include a simplified, and most importantly, open dialogue between society and the state, ministries of foreign affairs and foreign citizens, between diplomats and political leaders of different states. The ability to keep abreast of events and directly participate in such dialogues, to leave comments encourages citizens to actively “intervene” in foreign policy debates and decision-making processes, which makes Twitter diplomacy more transparent, increasing coverage and bypassing bureaucracy.

Also, speaking about the advantages of Twitter diplomacy, it is worth mentioning the accelerated response mechanism. The advantage of the prompt response of twitter diplomacy is largely confessed to the ministries of foreign affairs and overseas embassies. Here we are talking, firstly, about the immediate responses of diplomats to the crisis situations that the citizens of their country may face abroad. The Twitter web service ensures reliability in the provision of emergency consular assistance. The most telling example here is the Indian Foreign Ministry and especially the former Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj. On the morning of March 10, 2019, an Ethiopian Airlines Boeing 737 800 Max crashed shortly after leaving the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa. Among the 157 deaths on board were 4 Indians, including a consultant to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) at the Ministry of the Environment. The Foreign Minister kept in touch with the relatives of the three victims on Twitter, having previously found their phone numbers. In such cases, Twiplomacy is an effective way to shorten the time between “planning” and «concrete action/response», while the websites of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs fade into the background.

Sushma Swaraj's success also stemmed from the Indian Ministry of Foreign Affairs launching SEVA's Twitter service in 2016, which aims to systematize and

centralize grievance mechanisms received by the Indian Ministry of Foreign Affairs by consolidating Twitter accounts 198 Indian embassies overseas, 29 regional passport offices and eight other Foreign Ministry related pages such as @MEAIndia, @Indiandiplomacy and @MEAQuery under the SEVA Twitter umbrella. A tweet concerning any department of the Ministry is automatically sent to the SEVA platform and is designed to promptly resolve crisis situations and problematic issues of citizens.

Efficiency of response is an indicator of successful diplomacy and can be carried out not only at the state-society level, implemented in consular assistance, but also at the intergovernmental level in the format of a quick and clear response, designation of their positions in the world arena. For example, the tweet of the Russian Embassy in London on December 29, 2016, which was a response to the expulsion of 35 Russian diplomats by the Barack Obama administration, is an example: “The expulsion of 35 Russian diplomats by President Obama is the *deja vu* of the Cold War. Like everyone else, including the Americans, we will be happy to see the end of this hapless administration»¹¹ became widespread, scored almost 4 thousand comments and 23,4 thousand reposts¹².

Twitter diplomacy seriously enhances the activities to clarify the foreign policy positions of the state to the domestic and foreign audience, which in the context of digital diplomacy is very indicative and also forms an understanding of the certain nature of the state's foreign policy activities.

According to the old saying, “every coin has two sides” and Twiplomacy has a number of disadvantages.

The disadvantage of Twiplomacy is that the access of diplomatic processes to the Internet is the growth of a professional, specialized space due to the public one, as a result, the corners become more acute, and a number of difficulties appear.

¹¹ Obama expels 35 Russian diplomats in retaliation for US election hacking // The Guardian web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/dec/29/barack-obama-sanctions-russia-election-hack> Date of the application: 1.11.2020

¹² Russian Embassy, UK (@RussianEmbassy) Tweeter Post: December, 29 2016 [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://twitter.com/RussianEmbassy/status/814564127230271489> Date of the application: 2.11.2020

Firstly, it is the often arising dissonance between the genuine and the ostentatious - the real events that take place on the world stage, and what leaders can write, because digital diplomacy is often viewed as a tool of soft power.

Secondly, this is the disappearance of a safe public space, since today the status of messages and publications of leaders in social media is not completely clear. In some countries, foreign ministries tell their diplomats how to communicate on the Internet. These are still uncoded rules of conduct, but, nevertheless, attempts to create a certain framework are underway. The foreign ministries of the countries use digital technologies, relying on the Internet, acting reactively, that is, adapting to the events taking place. According to Oleg Sharikov, an analyst and expert at the Center for Strategic Research and the RIAC: “Therefore, for the future of digital diplomacy, the more important question is not what platform will replace Twitter, how foreign ministries, as large bureaucratic institutions, will adapt to new tasks and challenges in the information technology sphere.»¹³

Accordingly, until a sufficient base of Web 2.0 diplomacy specialists has been recruited, rules and recommendations for carrying out diplomatic activities on the Internet have not been developed, diplomats and government leaders need to act intuitively and with caution, because the consequences of one tweet are also not fully understood.

The second disadvantage of Twiplomacy is the possible escalation of the conflict.

In the history of Twitter diplomacy, there are cases when seemingly ordinary posts on Twitter led to a war of words, and then to an escalation of a real conflict. An illustrative example here is the 2017 conflict between the DPRK and the United States. On February 12, 2017, the North Korean government announced successful tests of equipping a ballistic missile with a nuclear warhead, and also emphasized the ability to evade the missile from interception. In March of the same year,

¹³ O. Shakirov. Будущее цифровой дипломатии [The future of digital diplomacy] // Medium web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://medium.com/clouddiplomacy/будущее-цифровой-дипломатии-6078e3ccbdc> Date of the application: 24.03.2021

another test was carried out and three out of four ballistic missiles fell in the exclusive economic zone of Japan. The DPRK justified its seemingly aggressive actions by the need to strengthen its defensive power and develop self-defense means in accordance with the status of an eastern nuclear power. However, in fact, according to Kim In-Ren, First Deputy Permanent Representative of the DPRK to the UN, it was the United States that first created a dangerous situation in the region by starting the deployment of the THAAD anti-aircraft missile system at the American base Seongju in South Korea, as well as conducting joint military exercises of South Korea and the United States. Moreover, from the side of the United States a group of American ships and the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier Carl Vinson were directed towards the Asian Peninsula. Consequently, the DPRK's fears and indicative responses were very well founded. The “verbal battle” between the two leaders contributed significantly to the acceleration of the conflict.

On July 3, 2017, after North Korea launched another nuclear missile, Donald Trump tweeted derisively: “North Korea just launched another missile. Has this guy had anything better in his life?”¹⁴. Further in his New Year speech, Kim Jong-un said, “It's not just a threat, but a reality when I have a nuclear button on my desk in my office. All the mainland United States is in the zone of our nuclear strike»¹⁵. Donald Trump could not help but reply to the leader of the DPRK and on January 3, 2018, he tweeted the following: "The leader of North Korea, Kim Jong-un, has just said that" the nuclear button is always on his desk. Maybe someone from his exhausted and hungry regime will inform him that I also have a nuclear button, but it is much larger and more powerful than him, and my button works!»¹⁶.

By publishing such messages, world leaders get carried away, perhaps not realizing what kind of “chain reaction” their tweets may have, since, as already

¹⁴ «Nothing better to do?»: Trump mocks Kim Jong-un's latest missile launch // The Guardian web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/jul/04/nothing-better-to-do-trump-mocks-new-kim-jong-uns-latest-missile-launch> Date of the application: 5.11.2020

¹⁵ Trump and Kim Jong-un, and the Names They've Called Each Other// The New York Times web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/09/world/asia/trump-kim-jong-un.html> Date of the application: 5.11.2020

¹⁶ Trump to Kim: My nuclear button is 'bigger and more powerful' // BBC News web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-42549687> Date of the application: 5.11.2020

mentioned, the public space has no boundaries, these tweets are available for any interpretation. So, one of the popular comments under the post: “Only 3 days in the new 2018 - and the President is bragging about the size of his «nuclear button»¹⁷. So, how close are we to World War III? And how did North Korea become the country it is today?

Thirdly, any sphere of activity on the scale of an individual, group or society as a whole, associated with information and communication technologies (ICT), is necessarily vulnerable, as a result of which cyberattacks and cybersecurity have become a phenomenon of the modern world. In the field of international relations, this is expressed in political conflicts in cyberspace, cybercrime, e-government. In this regard, one cannot fail to note the concept of “cybersecurity”, which means the implementation of measures to protect systems, networks and software applications from digital attacks. The peculiarity of today's cyber threat is that today no country in the world has a form and method of implementing these measures. This is especially pronounced in the area of security - cross-border cyber threats do not leave time to thoroughly study the problem and defend themselves, but require a quick response.

Twitter accounts are also at risk of being hacked by various political (government) actors, including political competitors, and non-state actors, including terrorist groups. In January 2019, German political parties represented in the federal parliament were hacked, with the exception of the far-right AfD (Alternative for Germany)¹⁸. The main targets of the attackers were Chancellor Angela Merkel and President Frank-Walter Steinmeier. Twitter data included mobile phone numbers, contact information, face-to-face chats, identity cards, and financial data. Moreover, cyber threats and cyberattacks can become a factor in the diplomatic game and be used in the interests of one state. There have been several such examples in history.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Germany's AfD: How right-wing is nationalist Alternative for Germany? // BBC News web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-37274201> Date of the application: 5.11.2020

Also one of the most recent striking examples is the events of 2016. On December 9, The Washington Post reported that the CIA had released data that concluded that Russia was interfering in the US presidential campaign this year through hacking. The document states that the US intelligence community is confident that the recent incursions into the electronic correspondence of American citizens and institutions, including American political organizations, were led by the Russian government. However, the statement did not specify these institutions and citizens, nor did it mention the purpose of this intervention. Experts and politicians commented at the time that the hacks were undertaken in order to spread distrust of the electoral system among Americans. Then the CIA changed their minds, pointing out that the actions of the hackers were aimed at helping Donald Trump win the election. To the question: “Why, if the servers were really hacked, no compromising evidence obtained by hackers was published?”, there was also an explanation that the Kremlin will now use it as a lever of influence on the future president. As a result, sanctions were again imposed on Russia. Two years later, on March 24, 2019, US Attorney General William Barr sent a memorandum to Congress, which clearly stated that the investigation did not establish a clear intervention. It can be concluded that cyber threats pose not only a real danger of hacking and the spread of malware, but under the pretext of cyber threats, an anti-Russian card, for example, can also be played.

Summing up, it should be noted that social networks have become an integral part of international dialogue. Initially, rather, within the framework of the soft power policy and the formation of the desired image. But then civil society institutions found themselves obliged to follow the agenda and also expand their scope of activity, moving to the platforms of interaction that ordinary citizens use on a daily basis. Diplomacy was no exception. Under the influence of digitalization and informatization, the sphere of traditional diplomacy has expanded and acquired new channels for the implementation of diplomatic strategies. The key channel was the digital social environment as a vehicle and social media platforms as direct instruments of influence.

Speaking about the advantages and disadvantages, as in any field, how many people, so many opinions. However, in our opinion, it is necessary to have a positive attitude towards the changes associated with diplomacy. It is worth noting the great involvement of citizens of all countries in political activities. Naturally, this is a double-edged sword, because this is a plus for people, but possibly a minus for many states and their political bodies. However, transparency will help to identify many problems in international relations and solve them. Almost all states show themselves excellently on the "stage" of digital diplomacy, actively improving their status among other states and among their subscribers.

1.3 Big data and methods of analysis in diplomacy.

It is important to note that Twiplomacy can be studied using quantifiable data. Agence France-Presse (AFP) was a pioneer in this sense when it appreciated the fact that by the end of 2013, almost two-thirds of its 193 member countries were on Twitter (although only 30 world leaders use Twitter regularly), and 15 the G20 governments have used it as the cornerstone of new diplomacy. In light of this, the company launched a website called ediplomacy.afp.com, which offers users real-time and global access to tweets from the most influential figures in international politics. AFP classifies, organizes, decodes, compares and evaluates over 4,000 Twitter accounts of heads of state, ministers, diplomats, as well as international organizations, experts, lobbyists, civil society representatives and leaders, activists and hackers. But interestingly, AFP, when evaluating quantifiable data, gives preference and popularity in the form of rankings to relevant figures and topics. There is also a site called Twiplomacy.com, which also numerically keeps track of what happens day in and day out on Twitter. In this regard, it is worth noting that in 2013, Twiplomacy.com presented a study that showed that 153 of the 193 countries with which the United States has a relationship had Twitter accounts. The study also showed that the audience of the world's leaders' accounts was approximately 106 million people, and in August 2014 it will reach 157 million people.

Also on this site it is possible to find updated information on the number of followers who read world leaders. This indicator has recently become very important for assessing the degree of leadership of the leading countries of the world. Among those who managed to use this communication phenomenon, we can name the American President Barack Obama, who in August 2014 had more than 47.9 million followers, the President of Venezuela Hugo Chavez, who even after his death has more than 3,6 million followers, which is much more than 2.7 million followers of Dmitry Medvedev, the Russian prime minister. On the other hand, Burson-Marsteller, through Twiplomacy.com, presented a study in June 2014 that noted Pope Francis as the most influential political leader on Twitter, while

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro came in second. This quantitative analysis assumes the development of a new type of manifestation of diplomacy, "numerical diplomacy".

Nor would it be a mistake to think that Twiplomacy promotes diplomacy by giving diplomats more tools in managing international affairs. But it is necessary to point out that in addition to the values that can be quantified, which we can find in Twiplomacy, there is another type of meanings, in particular, symbolic and functional meanings, which are gaining more and more importance in the international political game every day, and they as authentic as in traditional diplomacy. In this case, you need to refer to the symbolic meaning of «Follow» and «Unfollow» the user on Twitter. In fact, for this reason, there have been several diplomatic dead ends. For example, in 2011, Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard (@JuliaGillard) did not reciprocate ("Follow") the tracking of her Twitter account by his New Zealand counterpart John Phillip Kay (@JohnKeyPM); and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu did not respond ("Follow") with friendship to Palestine (@PMFayyad), which was regarded by the world community as unfriendly diplomatic positions. In this context, Twitter's "Follow" and "Unfollow" service is interpreted by the world community as an axis of diplomatic tension between governments. Thus, the diplomatic position of a country or its leader can be determined based on whether or not he follows a particular account.

To consider the measure of influence and activity on Twitter, it is necessary to consider such a concept as centrality. However, measuring a user's influence on a social network is not easy because it comes with a conceptual problem: Who is an influencer? Today there is no consensus among researchers about who is meant by an influencer. Therefore, new measures of influence are constantly emerging, each of which offers different criteria for measurement. A wide variety of criteria of influence includes the definition of new types of users that are closely related to the concept of influencer. Influential users are sometimes referred to as influencers, innovators, prestigious or influential members. Sometimes they are associated with the best experts in specific fields. Some researchers distinguish opinion leaders,

influencers, and debaters by type of activity and impact. The simplest measure of activity is «Tweet Rank», which is simply a metric that counts the number of a user's tweets. A slightly more complex measure is the «Tweet count score», which counts the number of original tweets plus the number of retweets. The authors of this classification offer their own measure of total activity, which is the sum of the visible actions of each user, that is, retweets, mentions, replies and likes.

Twitter influencer measures typically take into account metrics related to retweets, mentions and, to a lesser extent, followers. However, some researchers use traditional measures of centrality, such as proximity centrality and mediation centrality, which are not based on Twitter metrics at all, but refer to network topology, i.e. graph theory. A relatively new measure is the «Hirsch index», or «h-index», originally intended to measure a scientist's citation in the scientific community. A simplified version of this measure is to consider only retweets, tweets that contain URLs. There are also sites like Klout, PeerIndex, InfluenceTracker, Twitter Grader, Favstar, BehaviorMatrix, Kred, and Twitalyser that rank the most relevant Twitter users by activity, popularity, or influence. Most of these applications measure global impact. But the tweetStimuli web app allows you to rank local influencers. And NavigTweet lets you visualize influencers. The ratings change depending on the various centrality criteria considered.

There are three main methods for collecting data through the Twitter API. The first is Firehose, the second is REST, which is the remaining tweets, and the third is Stream, which is the stream of tweets. Each of them implies different procedures for retrieving specific data. The first method, Firehose, provides full access to tweet data without any restrictions. Firehose API provides 100% real-time Twitter data. While this method is ideal for research, scientists generally do not use Firehose due to its high cost. Only large companies and institutions with large monetary resources can afford to use it. Also, Firehose is not directly accessible, meaning it is not public. Thus, researchers can only access the Firehose API through third-party companies such as Gnip and DataSift. The good news is that the other two methods REST and Stream are public and relatively easy to access. The possibilities of REST API variables are huge: reading author profiles

and subscriber data, i.e. followers, retrieving settings, languages, etc. In addition to supporting coding, the Stream API requires more hard disk space as the collected data can be larger. On average, a million tweets require about one gigabyte of hard disk space. A common solution is to have an external server or a server provided by the university to store the collected data. Only one method provides 100% of Twitter data, that is, the Firehose API, while the other two methods collect up to 1% of tweets, depending on the filters applied by Twitter. This state of affairs raises the following research problems.

The main problem with Twitter data analytics is data bias. What does this mean? The fact is that given that the collected data make up up to 1% of the total amount of data about any event, it is extremely difficult to draw reliable conclusions about very large events or global events. The device type of both public APIs makes it impossible to repeat the same collection of data. This is a serious research limitation, as researchers are unaware of the specific sampling methods used by public APIs to meet their needs.

Another limitation of the Twitter study is representativeness bias, that is, the low representation of the general public on Twitter. There are several reasons for this. The first reason is the lower usage of Twitter compared to other platforms like Facebook or media like TV, newspapers and radio. Today, Twitter has about 186 million¹⁹ active users worldwide, while Facebook has 2.6 billion²⁰. The second reason is the difference in the level of Twitter usage around the world. In some countries it is widely used, while in others its use is negligible.

And the third reason is the digital divide, which raises additional concerns about the generalization of any insights transferred from the online to the offline realm. The population of Twitter is different from the general population. They tend to be younger and better educated. The next important point about the limitations of Twitter can be called the language challenge, or the language

¹⁹ Twitter Revenue and Usage Statistics (2021) // Business of Apps [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://www.businessofapps.com/data/twitter-statistics/> Date of the application: 5.05.2021

²⁰ Facebook Demographic Statistics: How Many People Use Facebook in 2021? // Blacklinko [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://backlinko.com/facebook-users> Date of the application: 5.05.2021

problem created by language bubbles that are generated by users interacting in different languages. When collecting data, it is always important to keep in mind the difference in hashtags in different languages, otherwise it can spoil the results.

In conclusion, there are some methodological caveats to consider when doing research on Twitter data. By the way, in scientific articles, these restrictions are always written in the appropriate section before the conclusion. However, even if the Twitter-world is not identical to the offline world, it is completely real, because its users - their desires, emotions and political views are real. So why might Twitter be so important to an international relations researcher? Well, firstly, because of its unique degree of transnational communication and open interactivity among users. Just think, this makes the platform an ideal public arena, in principle, without any restrictions. Secondly, because of its asymmetric and open principle of following, that is, user subscriptions without obligatory reciprocity. We can track which states, politicians and international organizations are subscribed to each other and which are not. In conclusion, at this stage, Twitter, with its very open APIs, is an ideal environment to explore as it enables us to dynamically analyze political data.

Hashtags are text combinations preceded by a hash sign and are used to contextually label Internet conversations about a particular topic. In addition to labeling, they also serve as a mechanism for creating and sharing, maintaining information visibility, expressing support, filtering, and targeting content to specific audiences.

Finally, the hashtag itself can be a post or part of it. The fact is that hashtags have become symbols of free speech as tools to launch massive campaigns against social injustice. An example is #MeToo²¹ or #BlackLivesMatter ²² movement. In this regard, scientists drew attention to the importance of hashtags as a tool for

²¹ Автор глобального исследования о #MeToo — про харассмент в Антарктиде, феминизм в Аргентине и «дело Слуцкого» [Author of a global study on #MeToo - about harassment in Antarctica, feminism in Argentina and the "Slutsky case"] // Forbes Russia web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://www.forbes.ru/forbes-woman/402949-avtor-globalnogo-issledovaniya-o-metoo-pro-harassment-v-antarktide-feminizm-v> Date of the application: 25.01.2021

²² Black Lives Matter // Black Lives Matter web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://blacklivesmatter.com/news/> Date of the application: 25.01.2020

mobilizing online protest and participation in political life through hashtag activism. However, the discussion quickly escalated from the brochure or mobilization role of hashtags to the dark side of hashtag use. That is, the skillful and strategic use of hashtags to abuse, incite, misinform and spread so-called fake news on social networks. Moreover, being powerful social media infiltration tools, hashtags are increasingly used by conflicting parties, forcing researchers to focus more on the problem of manipulating social media traffic. Researchers use different perspectives and methodologies to study political hashtags. Much of the scientific literature is devoted to the use of hashtags in everyday political discussions on Twitter and offers several important conclusions.

First, despite the fact that Twitter serves as a meeting place for citizens and the fact that 70% of Twitter users are involved in serial activism²³, that is, they constantly demonstrate the initiative, the activity of authoritative political actors, as well as niche political groups, is more significant. Also, only the flow of hashtags associated with activism is able to go beyond the linguistic cluster.

Second, political hashtags are more persistent and have a greater relative impact on their adoption, as their subsequent impacts become more significant after the peak, in line with the complex contagion principle.

Third, the proliferation of political hashtags differs from the proliferation of news hashtags in the more diverse dynamics driven by active communities. This phenomenon is called "resonant significance". To summarize, hashtag-driven political reply and retweet networks are different from social or informational networks. In addition, research in this area explores the semantic, linguistic and communicative features of hashtags in order to understand their functions during protests. Examining linguistic changes in the use of political hashtags over time has led to the discovery of a phenomenon called hashtag drift. Hashtag drift means that over time, a more varied vocabulary of hashtags appears around the center tag. By the way, the linguistic approach is closely related to the gender approach, which in turn, based on the semantic choice of men and women, analyzes gender behavior

²³ M.T. Bastos, D. Marcea. Serial activists: Political Twitter beyond influentials and the twittertariat. // New Media & Society 18(10) May, 2015 P. 9

in tweets with political content. But back to the linguistic approach. By applying it, scholars classify the types of political hashtags according to their linguistic function. They distinguish between expressive (i.e. emotive), reference, volitional and metalinguistic hashtags.

Thus, we can conclude that Twitter is an ideal mechanism for tracking the analytical part of digital diplomacy, thanks to its numerous sites and applications. Twitter made the new diplomacy transparent, cloudy.

To conclude this chapter, it is worth summarizing the significance of Twitter today. Every day, each of us uses social networks, diplomats are no exception. Their open position allows us to follow daily news reports in the field of digital diplomacy, analyze their data using various analytical programs. Despite the different experts' opinions about the significance of Twiplomacy, this is an absolutely new trend that will not return us to the past and will only develop. We need to be able to adapt to new realities, because due to digitalization, we can own any information at any time of the day.

Chapter II. Personal digital diplomacy of diplomats

2.1 Michael McFaul and his “bold” digital foreign policy.

Diplomats and representatives of diplomatic departments actively put forward their thoughts on the Internet, namely through their pages on social networks. Every self-respecting diplomat in our time has personal official accounts on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, with the help of which they convey their thoughts to readers, and sometimes change the international situation.

One of the brightest representatives of the diplomatic department on the Internet is Michael McFall, an American scientist, politician and former US Ambassador to the Russian Federation. Michael McFaul is the Professor of International Studies in Political Science, Director and Senior Fellow at the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies. He was also the Distinguished Mingde Faculty Fellow at the Stanford Center at Peking University from June to August of 2015. He joined the Stanford faculty in 1995. He is also an analyst for NBC News and a contributing columnist to The Washington Post. McFaul served for five years in the Obama administration, first as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Russian and Eurasian Affairs at the National Security Council at the White House (2009-2012), and then as U.S. Ambassador to the Russian Federation (2012-2014). He has authored several books, most recently the New York Times bestseller «From Cold War to Hot Peace: An American Ambassador in Putin’s Russia». His current research interests include American foreign policy, great power relations between China, Russia, and the United States, and the relationship between democracy and development.²⁴

In 2012, Michael McFaul started his Russian-language blog on LiveJournal. His first welcome post with a promotional video immediately hit all sorts of tops. In addition to LiveJournal, McFaul started Twitter - @McFaul, and also announced himself on the page of the American Embassy in Moscow on Facebook. Why did

²⁴ Michael McFaul // Stanford profiles web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://profiles.stanford.edu/michael-mcfaul> Date of the application: 23.03.2021

McFaul join LiveJournal? How is he going to use social media? For personal PR or as an instrument of real politics? Is it possible to influence the Russian Internet audience in this way?

In a promotional video posted on the blog and gaining till now more than 85,000 views on Youtube²⁵, McFaul emphasizes that his most important mission is "to help Russians understand who Americans are, what they want and what they strive for in relations with Russia and the Russian the people"²⁶. In other words, the goal of the American ambassador was to dispel the image of the United States as an enemy among Russians, or to refute the rhetoric of the current Russian government, using, among other things, the possibilities of social media.

The use of social networks by Americans to increase their influence on the world has long been a priority in their information policy. American social services Twitter, Facebook, Instagram are showing frantic growth rates, especially since 2012. The Russian social media audience is also quite impressive and continues to grow every day. Moreover, if traditional media largely filter information, presenting statements and their authors in the light necessary for the authorities, then there is no such censorship in social networks yet - even McFaul could use them as a mouthpiece for his ideas, addressing directly to the citizens of Russia without any intermediaries in the form of journalists, political scientists or all kinds of censors.

McFaul's appearance on the web has generated a lot of comments from readers. People reacted both positively and negatively about their "dislike" for the American government and everyone associated with it. "I already have hundreds of comments on my posts that I need to respond to. So, I apologize to everyone who left me comments that I have not yet responded to. But I plan to intensify my presence on the Internet,"²⁷ he said.

²⁵ US Embassy Moscow, Russia (2012) Знакомьтесь: Посол США в России Майкл Макфол [Meet US Ambassador to Russia Michael McFaul] // YouTube. January, 13 [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ux0cPaLxR78> Date of the application: 23.03.2021

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ На грани Макфола [On the verge of McFaul] (2012) // GQ Russia web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://www.gq.ru/heroes/na-grani-makfola> Date of the application: 23.03.2021

Be that as it may, but the newly-minted ambassador declared himself loudly and strongly on Runet - his appearance on LiveJournal caused a violent reaction from bloggers. Thus, the popular blogger Oleg Kozyrev writes: "Oh, it turned out that the new US ambassador came to LiveJournal. That's cool. The person understands where it makes sense to keep the representation. McFaul was on my personal list of desirable candidates for the US Ambassador. More than McFaul, I would only like Senator Cardin at the embassy. And McFaul for the period of change is what you need. We (Russia and the United States), after the 12th year, many dictators will have to pinch their tails together.»²⁸

A PR move that caused no less resonance was the invitation to the American Embassy of Russian public activists and politicians seeking to come forward on the wave of popular discontent with the results of the parliamentary elections. Among the invitees were Sergei Mitrokhin, Evgenia Chirikova, Boris Nemtsov, Oksana Dmitrieva and others. The video about this with the biting title "Receiving Instructions at the US Embassy" gathered more than 380 thousand views on Youtube. And TV presenter Mikhail Leontyev, on the air of the central television channel, accused Michael McFaul of preparing a revolution in Russia, which, in turn, provoked a protest from the US State Department.

During his two years as the main American in Moscow, McFaul frequently tweeted, posted on Facebook and wrote in LiveJournal, which aroused great interest. Mr. McFaul's comments spanned both his professional and personal life, and he was not afraid to interact with the audience, even if it meant waging a Twitter war with the Russian Foreign Ministry or discussing his personal life and American culture with followers from Siberia. In many ways, McFaul has become an advertising model for Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's efforts to adapt American governance for the twenty-first century by spreading digital diplomacy. Foreign Policy named McFaul in the top 100 Twitter users in 2013²⁹, and in

²⁸ O. Kozyrev. Майкл Макфол в ЖЖ [Michael McFaul in LiveJournal] (2012) // LiveJournal [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://oleg-kozyrev.livejournal.com/3951062.html> Date of the application: 4.04.2021

²⁹ The FP Twitterati 100 // ForeignPolicy web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2013/08/13/the-fp-twitterati-100/> Date of the application: 5.04.2021

December 2013, the State Department's official monthly magazine even published an article about his social media activism.

As follows from a special report of the US Embassy in the Russian Federation, in November 2012, just over 40 thousand people were subscribed to the Twitter account of Ambassador Michael McFaul, most of whom are from Russia. The audience of some of his posts on the specifics of electoral law in the United States reached more than 470 thousand people - due to retweets. And all these people, if they wanted, could ask a question to the American ambassador, which many used. He tried to answer everyone. Before the advent of "digital diplomacy," such a thing could not have been imagined - perhaps if the American ambassador had been given a live broadcast on Channel One, and everyone who called the studio had a guaranteed opportunity to ask him a question.

During the short period of his tenure as US Ambassador to Russia, Michael McFaul has more than once "caught" the use of non-diplomatic language in relation to Russia. "I will not be diplomatic: I'll tell you directly that your country bribed Kyrgyzstan to kick the Americans out of Manas,"³⁰ said Michael McFaul, at a lecture "Reboot: Theory, Results, Future"³¹ for students Higher School of Economics in Moscow on May 25. He added that the United States also offered Kyrgyzstan a bribe, but its amount is 10 times less. The ambassador's remarks at a lecture to students angered the Russian Foreign Ministry, which responded to Michael McFaul's speech with a series of tweets. The Foreign Ministry said that it was "shocked by the ambassador's statement" and that the ambassador "deliberately distorted several aspects of the Russian-American dialogue."³² Michael McFaul also responded to Twitter messages from the Russian Foreign Ministry on Twitter: "My speech at the university lists more than 20 positive

³⁰ U.S. Envoy Ignites Russia Controversy With Bribe Accusation // Bloomberg web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2012-05-29/u-s-ambassador-ignites-russia-controversy-with-bribe-accusation> Date of the application: 1.04.2021

³¹ Майкл Макфол: «Мы надеемся, что наши отношения окончательно нормализуются» [Michael McFaul: "We hope that our relationship will finally return to normal"] // HSE web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://www.hse.ru/news/53425427.html> Date of the application: 5.04.2021

³² Ibid.

results of the 'reset' that the Russian and US governments are working on."³³ He also posted a presentation that he showed to the students. This is just one example of a sharp statement by the ex-ambassador, discussion and proceedings after which took place on Twitter.

US State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said the Russian authorities had misinterpreted Ambassador Michael McFaul's words about the Manas base during his speech to students at the Higher School of Economics. V. Nuland said in Washington on Tuesday that she believed the bulk of McFaul's speech focused on the benefits of the "reset" policy in US-Russian relations stated that in the Q&A section, something he said seems to have been misunderstood or misinterpreted by the Russian Foreign Ministry.

Three days after the American ambassador's speech to the students, the Russian Foreign Ministry said that McFaul's statements go far beyond diplomatic etiquette in form, and in fact represent a deliberate distortion of a number of aspects of the Russian-American dialogue.

The ministry stressed that this is not the first time that the statements and actions of Mr. McFaul, who is in such a responsible post, cause shock. Nuland noted that McFaul is characterized by a manner of expressing his opinion directly, with which the Russian authorities, according to the State Department spokesman, would have to put up with it. The State Department spokeswoman, in return, stressed that McFaul is not a professional diplomat. "Perhaps I shouldn't have been so colorful and straightforward. I agree with that, and will continue to try to speak more diplomatically,"³⁴ the ambassador wrote in his blog.

McFaul said in his early days in ambassadorial affairs that he would like to become a modern ambassador, an ambassador for the 21st century. He was serious about becoming a professional, as they say, a traditional diplomat in dealing with Russian diplomats and the country's leadership.

³³ Макфол пообещал говорить о международных делах более дипломатично [McFaul promised to speak more diplomatically about international affairs] // RIA web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://ria.ru/20120530/660382163.html> Date of the application: 5.04.2021

³⁴Ibid.

He fulfilled his goal one hundred percent. There are many opinions about what kind of ambassador he was in his years, whether he was able to cope with all the tasks. However, in terms of the digitalization of diplomacy, he has brought tremendous changes to the structure of diplomacy in the 21st century.

2.2 The development of Russian digital diplomacy at the present stage. Maria Zakharova.

In 2014, the first official account of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on a social network began to work, it was Facebook. This is the reason for the decision to analyze the reviews of the Russian Foreign Ministry.

Against the background of digital diplomacy, there was a constant content filling of all relevant accounts on social networks and various media platforms. During this period, more than 700 different videos were posted on the departmental channel in Youtube, which received more than 400 thousand views. Numerous blog projects were launched on the websites of the Russia Today MIA, within the Russia Today television channel and the Ekho Moskvyy radio station. The practice of daily online communication was mastered, which was devoted to the country's foreign policy issues, discussed with the target audience of social networks and the most popular news sites. Such efforts did not pass unnoticed through the professional community, resulting in the Russian Foreign Ministry being awarded the authoritative Runet Prize for 2014 in the Culture, Media and Mass Communications nomination.

The practice of direct communication with the audience in popular social networks continued. The demand for this work is evidenced by the fact that the total number of readers of the accounts of the Russian Foreign Ministry is steadily growing. More than 1 million users have already subscribed to the Russian-speaking account on Twitter, and 440 thousand people on Facebook. In 2015, the Ministry opened its VKontakte account for Russian-speaking users and introduced the Twitter account in English, provided support to Russian media abroad on an ongoing basis. Not a single serious episode related to the obstruction of the professional activities of our journalists in foreign countries was left without attention.

In November 2016, the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation was published on the official website of the Russian Foreign Ministry. Chapter III "Priorities of the Russian Federation in solving global problems" in paragraph 46

of the section "Information support of the foreign policy of the Russian Federation" noted the following: "An important direction of the foreign policy of the Russian Federation is to bring to the world community objective information about Russia's position on major international problems, its foreign policy initiatives and actions, processes and plans for the socio-economic development of the Russian Federation, achievements of Russian culture and science"³⁵. Further, in paragraph 47, it is indicated that in order to objectively perceive Russia among a foreign audience, it is necessary "to widely use new information and communication technologies."³⁶ The Ministry faces the task of strengthening the position of the Russian-language media in the global information space, "providing them with the necessary state support for this, actively participates in international cooperation in the information sphere, takes the necessary measures to counter threats to its information security»³⁷.

In addition, according to the global rating of digital diplomacy, Russia took the fourth place, and, according to Twiplomacy, the official Russian-language page of the Russian Foreign Ministry on Twitter took the fourth position in the number of subscribers and the second in the number of interactions with the target audience. In 2017, the digital diplomacy of the Russian Foreign Ministry received a number of great responses from the Western media.

Meanwhile, in the same year, the Digital Diplomacy Department of the Information and Press Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry was headed by Sergei Nalobin, known for his popular Twitter account (@SNalobin). The Russian diplomat is clearly aware of the task of digital diplomacy in Russia: "It is important to understand that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been working on social networks for a long time and uses these platforms, these tools, first of all, for

³⁵ Priorities of the Russian Federation in solving global problems. Chapter III. Paragraph 46 "Information support of the foreign policy of the Russian Federation" // ConsultantPlus web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_27822/a524d3dce829147967f1ca115c9a9bbe3abdbc7b/ Date of the application: 12.03.2021

³⁶ Priorities of the Russian Federation in solving global problems. Chapter III. Paragraph 47 "Information support of the foreign policy of the Russian Federation" // ConsultantPlus web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_27822/a524d3dce829147967f1ca115c9a9bbe3abdbc7b/ Date of the application: 12.03.2021

³⁷ Ibid.

the purpose of information and explanatory work. We explain the nuances of Russian foreign policy for both Russian and foreign audiences, for us this is an important part of the work."³⁸

The next person in the development of digital diplomacy in Russia is the official representative of the diplomatic service Maria Zakharova.

Answering the question: is it possible to consider statements in the accounts of individual diplomats or diplomatic missions as the official position of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the exact answer was given by the official representative of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Maria Zakharova, who stated that "if this comment was published from the official account of the embassy or the account of a person authorized to communicate with the press, then it can be considered official. If a diplomat published something on his personal page, this is an unofficial comment. It's simple.»³⁹

«In principle, working on social networks is the sphere of agreements within the organization or corporation in which you work. As a rule, this issue is regulated by internal regulations. When journalists from the pool fly with us, I watch them send news materials to the editorial office, and at the same time share their personal assessments of the trip on social networks. This is a matter of agreement between the publication and the journalist: whether the employer allows him to do so or not. I know a number of media outlets in which this practice is not encouraged. Other publications do not pay attention to this, but the employer asks to indicate that this is a personal opinion of a person, which does not reflect the point of view of the editorial board. In third places, on the contrary, the mention of

³⁸ Oleg Shakirov's blog. Russian digital diplomacy.// RIAC web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: https://russiancouncil.ru/blogs/shakirov/russian_digital_diplomacy_2017/ Date of the application: 24.04.2021

³⁹ M. Zaharova (2019) Interview to RG [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://rg.ru/2019/02/10/zaharova-ne-hochu-stanovitsia-chinushej-bezrazlichnoj-k-chuzhim-problemam.html> Date of the application: 24.04.2021

your publication in social networks and the promotion of this brand using your personal resources are encouraged.»⁴⁰ - said Zaharova.

However, Maria said that Russian digital diplomacy, while working, faces increased censorship and political engagement from the administration of social networks. She made this statement in her video message to the participants of the conference "Digital Technologies and Scientific Diplomacy".⁴¹

According to her, the digitalization of the information space made it possible to communicate with a wide audience directly, but at the same time brought disinformation to a new level.

Digital diplomacy is gaining more and more momentum every day, and here not only knowledge in this area is important, but also initiative. The Foreign Ministry is a big bureaucracy that needs to be encouraged to master new methods of diplomacy. If the leader understands the meaning of this and sees this as a goal, he will do everything possible to make this method effective. Maria Zakharova shows good results. She is paving the way for Russia in small steps on the way to a new, modern diplomacy, doing it boldly and actively.

The coronavirus put the world in a new framework: people had to survive in modern realities. The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, represented by Maria Zakharova, demonstrated the smooth operation of the ministry, thereby bringing diplomacy to a new level. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation turned out to be completely ready to transfer work to online mode due to the coronavirus pandemic, as it has been building up its capabilities in this area for several years. The coronavirus pandemic and the related restrictions raised the question of the readiness to transfer the entire volume of numerous events organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the online format. The scale of the country and the number of various events in the regions of the Russian Federation

⁴⁰ Представитель МИД РФ Мария Захарова — о развитии цифровой дипломатии [Representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Maria Zakharova - on the development of digital diplomacy] // Kommersant web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/3690055> Date of the application: 24.04.2021

⁴¹ DIGITAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OFFICE NEWS (26, November 2020) Conference in Samara, Russia. [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://en.samaradigital.ru/news/2020/the-international-conference-digital-technologies-and-science-diplomacy-has-started-in-samara/> Date of the application: 28.04.2021

prompted diplomats to use information technologies more actively and thereby save time, effort and money. Zakharova pointed out that the main challenge for the Russian Foreign Ministry in a pandemic was the task of returning Russians from abroad, and this required a new approach to building communication with citizens. “We are faced with a problem that the world has never experienced. Thousands of people every second turned to both the embassies and the Foreign Ministry of the Russian Federation,”⁴² Zakharova explained. That is, from mid-March it was necessary to completely reformat the work of both territorial and functional departments, taking into account this global task. The official representative of the diplomatic service also pointed out that in the current circumstances it is necessary to use the opportunities of the information space as much as possible in order, among other things, to maintain cultural ties with other states.

At that time, despite the support and active proliferation of social networks within the framework of digital diplomacy, Maria actively advocated the fight against fake news. In her opinion, we are talking about a total epidemic of fake news, which, unfortunately, is becoming a real pandemic. Maria calls on everyone, and first of all the UN, to think about a strategy for the non-proliferation of disinformation. The strategy presupposes both a legal framework and a whole set of mechanisms, methods, information campaigns to counter this, by and large, the evil of the modern world.

As for Maria Zakhara's personal blog, the official representative is actively developing his accounts on social networks, sometimes sharing personal information and photos. In an interview with Lenta.ru, Maria said that this format of communication with the audience is of great interest on both sides. Maria said that often people leave negative comments in the comments, and send requests and

⁴² Брифинг официального представителя МИД России М.В.Захаровой [Briefing of the official representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia M.V. Zakharova] Moscow. April, 9 2020 // Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation [Electronic resource]. - URL: https://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/4097482 Date of the application: 25.04.2021

thanks in private messages. She really listens to many of them and tries to make the requests and wishes of the followers come true.

Maria claims that there was no turning point, after which the number of friends and subscribers began to grow exponentially. It was a common network story - people repost, leave comments, their friends see it, read it, and so on. Also, in 2015, Maria started blogs on the platforms of a number of media outlets - Echo of Moscow, RT, RIA Novosti. This, of course, drew attention to her personal Facebook page.

Maria gives a clear answer to research question: Is a diplomat's personal account considered reliable information? In her opinion, “not only Western foreign ministers, but also other diplomats have blogs. Ambassadors are very active on social networks.»

True, when we talk about diplomat's blogs, it is very difficult to draw a line separating the personal from the official. In my opinion, it would be correct to call their thoughts “expert opinion.” Because these people are experts in their field and at the same time do not express either a purely personal point of view or a purely official one.

Based on the above, it should be noted that the emergence of such personalized social media diplomacy due to the fact that in modern conditions of the information society, a diplomat must necessarily be a "strategically focused processor of public opinion." According to the American diplomat and political scientist S.S. Kinney, a diplomat cannot afford the role of a passive observer, and therefore he needs to be able to independently form the information flow.

To conclude, it is worth noting that the two diplomatic workers we have chosen represent a vivid example of how the work of a diplomat has become different, has new characteristics, and has met new challenges. Both diplomats have shown themselves incredibly brightly in this area.

Answering the question whether a personalized blog is considered an official source, we came to the following opinion: consider such a blog as an expert opinion, because a diplomat expresses only his point of view on a particular issue.

In addition, in the next post, he can share personal information that will not be in any way related to diplomatic activities. A personal blog is a diplomat's personal space. However, institutional blogs, which will be discussed in the next chapter, play a completely different role.

Chapter III. Institutional use of Twiplomacy

3.1 Institutional discourse of digital diplomacy. Its distinguishing features from personalized accounts.

The beginning of the XXI century was the beginning of numerous transformations in social practice. Diplomatic discourse that is inextricably linked with social institutions has also undergone significant changes. For a long time, the diplomatic discourse was of a closed nature and was represented mainly by equal-status communication at the highest level through text documents (personal notes, notes verbales, memoranda, private letters of a semi-official nature, etc.). Informing the general population about foreign policy events took place mainly through the mass media, where the messages were of little content and sometimes provocative. Over time, the informative component of communication between diplomats and representatives of the press has intensified due to public speeches, open interviews, the creation of press services at diplomatic departments. The diplomatic discourse today is becoming more open, similar in terms of implementation specifics to media discourse. The expansion of the potential audience, the strategic focus of the diplomatic discourse on the active introduction of information technologies led to the emergence of a new communicative phenomenon - digital diplomacy.

The rich functionality of social media is in line with modern open information policy of diplomacy and helps to significantly increase the potential of government public relations that underlie digital diplomacy. The digital primary source of state relations with the public is the communicative space of the official website of the diplomatic department. However, the site does not allow for feedback, that is, to track the reaction of the mass audience, while social networks, due to their technical features, provide such an opportunity. In this regard, it is natural to actively use social networks in modern diplomatic practice. Each website of the diplomatic department is obligatorily provided with a hypertext link to official accounts in various social networks. As a rule, the most popular resources are chosen as communication platforms for such diplomacy: Facebook, Twitter,

YouTube, Instagram, which play a significant role in political life. Digital diplomacy is dominated by the appeal to Facebook and Twitter, which provide the audience with wide communication opportunities due to their adaptability for use as a blog. As the researchers note, a blog is not limited to a personal diary and can be created by a team of authors. In this regard, it seems possible to divide the diplomatic discourse of social networks into institutional and personalized. In this chapter, we'll take a look at an institutional blog.

It acts as a continuation of the official site, where a direct hypertext link is given. There is, for example, the Official page of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Facebook. The reason for the widespread use of Facebook and Twitter in digital diplomacy is that these social networks are popular among Internet users around the world, and, therefore, make it possible to reach the widest possible audience both among citizens of their own country and abroad. For example, after the launch of a new account for the US Department of State in Turkey, Assistant Representative for Public Affairs and Digital Strategy Victoria Esser said that her department was always looking for ways to expand its ability to inform the audience and be interesting to her. Social media makes it possible to accomplish this task in real time and cover such a wide range of action that, as V. Esser noted, the State Department at the time of the existence of only traditional non-digital means of public diplomacy could only dream of Facebook and Twitter have become so popular in the practice of digital diplomacy that international relations experts identify Facebook diplomacy and Twiplomacy as subsections of social media diplomacy.

Blogs on Facebook and Twitter have a number of mandatory design elements: 1) background image, 2) user profile, 3) list of friendly accounts. The background image (cover photo) in the communicative space of the blog plays an identical role to the departmental website, that is, it graphically reflects the institutional specifics of the blog. As a background, the authors of the institutional blog choose images related to the activities of the organization. First, the background image can be an image of the location of a department or a building of an institution that represents an institutional symbol, for example, the building of

the Russian Foreign Ministry (e.g. the official page of the Russian Foreign Ministry on Facebook). In some cases, an explanation is published directly on the image itself. For example: Hamburg - host of the OSCE Ministerial Council 2016 on the OSCE Facebook page (The Facebook page of OSCE). Thus, the addressee was informed that in 2016 the Council of Foreign Ministers (the meeting of the OSCE governing body) is being held in Hamburg. An additional reference point is the symbol located next to the departmental abbreviation, painted in the colors of the state flag of Germany, and the signature of Deutschland 2016. Secondly, the background image can be an image reflecting the historical aspects of the department's activities, accompanied by a special text explanation. Thus, on the official Russian-language page of the UN on Facebook, a snapshot of the sculpture "Non-Violence"⁴³ was used as a screensaver. Thirdly, as a background image, a photo frame can be used that reflects the practical activities of department employees, evokes positive emotions and thereby contributes to a positive perception of the text information presented in the tape.

User profile - an obligatory part of the formed communicative space in social networks Facebook and Twitter - includes a graphic image of the addressee (profile photo) and basic information about the user displayed in text format. The official blog of the department is not personified, therefore, graphic symbols and images of an institutional nature are used as a profile photo. As a rule, these are the official symbols of the department. A profile photo can also serve as a graphic means of expressing the current position of the foreign ministry. For example, on the official pages of the French MFA on Facebook (France Diplomatie) and Twitter (The official Twitter page of French MFA in English) on October 25, 2013, an image of the flags of France and the European Union was posted (it is also used in 2016), which reflects the desire of the French foreign ministry to emphasize the inextricable link between France and the rest of the member states of the European Union, as well as to declare its commitment to the economic and political goals and objectives of European integration.

⁴³ The "Non-Violence" (or "Knotted Gun") sculpture by Swedish artist Carl Fredrik Reuterswärd on display at the UN Visitors' Plaza.

List of friendly accounts - blogs and Internet resources that the addressee reads and refers to. In digital diplomacy, accounts of other departments, government organizations or public diplomacy institutions appear as friendly.

Externally, a ministry account differs from a personal account in a small one. For example, in the personified diplomacy of social networks, additional text inserts of a communicative and strategic orientation can be added to the user profile. In the discourse of the diplomatic department on the social network, such insertions are absent due to the higher institutional relevance of the communicative space of the blog and the official website of the department. However, the main difference lies in the content of the news feed, the quality of the information provided.

The main task of the institutional blog and microblogging is to inform users about current foreign policy events, therefore, the discourse of the tape of recordings of such a communicative space is predominantly informational in nature. Such messages can be considered as informationally holistic, since they indicate the place of action of the described event, time, direct participants of the event, the cause of the event or its purpose, that is, all informationally significant components of the event were taken into account. Graphic images accompanying the text increase the informational value of the message and visualize the described events. At the same time, it should be noted that the discourse of the tape of records can be in the nature of self-presentation and the already mentioned national branding. For example, a message published on the official page of the French Foreign Ministry on Twitter informs the addressee about the tourist attractiveness of France with the indication of statistical data. The sentence ends with an exclamation mark, indicating the emotionality of the message, which is not characteristic of standard information publications, identical in style to the texts of the news feed of the departmental website. The expressiveness of the message is further enhanced by the hash tags used, e.g. #ProudOfFrance #ComeVisitUs.

Hashtags, according to A.P. Atyagina, represent the main method of semantic compression in social networks⁴⁴. Often, it is precisely the requirements of the genre and communication space that determine the use of hashtags by diplomatic departments, since they can be used to briefly express the main idea and at the same time be an extremely accurately understood address, which is especially important for departmental discourse, not admitting ambiguity.

In addition, an important communicative feature of the tape is the inclusion of messages from other communicative spaces of the network used. Within Twitter, this phenomenon is called retweets - a specific type of tweet that has been recommended by a user (subscriber) for viewing by other Twitter users. Retweets make it possible to diversify the feed of entries in the blogs of diplomatic ministries, providing information from other sources of foreign policy information, in particular, personalized accounts of diplomats on social networks. Retweets on the official US Department of State Twitter account are messages from personified sources of diplomacy on social networks, that is, the accounts of American diplomats. Such interpenetration of text spaces not only expands the information content of the institutional account, but also guides the addressee in using other sources of foreign policy information. It should be noted that the personified space of a diplomat in a social network can be considered as a special communicative practice with numerous specific features, which makes it necessary to analyze the personified discourse of a diplomat in social networks separately from the institutional one.

So, the active involvement of diplomatic departments in the communicative space of social networks has made changes in the discursive information practice of foreign policy departments. Text messages are mostly limited to a certain number of characters. The discursive features of the presentation of the department with the help of background images and accompanying texts, as well as publications in the feed, implement in the aggregate the strategy of national

⁴⁴ A.P. Atyagina. Твиттер как новая дискурсивная практика в сети Интернет [Twitter as a New Discursive Practice on the Internet] // OmSU Bulletin. 2012. №4 (66) P. 12. [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/tvitter-kak-novaya-diskursivnaya-praktika-v-seti-internet> Date of the application: 4.05.2021

branding, that is, creating a positive image of the represented country or state with the help of special means of communication. The success of such an impact and diplomacy of social networks in general is due to the increased popularity of such information and communication platforms as Facebook and Twitter, which have become important channels of modern diplomacy in the Internet space.

3.2 Impact of COVID-19 on the practice of institutional digital diplomacy.

There are practically no spheres of human activity left on the planet that would not have been affected by the changes caused by the spread of coronavirus infection (COVID-19). The diplomatic service did not stand aside either.

This is primarily due to the expansion of the use of digital technologies in everyday work and personal activities, which leaves a significant mark on the development of public and digital diplomacy in the world.

Covid-19 forced the transition of humanity to more active use of Internet platforms, social networks and other digital services. For example, video conferencing through Zoom has become an integral, everyday part of communication for many organizations, government agencies and even educational almost of every county. According to The New York Times, the Zoom app is downloaded up to 600,000 times a day⁴⁵. And the daily audience of the application reached 200 million people in the spring of 2020. The popularity of this service led to an unprecedented rise in the company's shares: in March 2020, the company's capitalization increased to \$ 43.6 billion⁴⁶. Of course, other applications and messengers for communication have also become widespread during lockdowns, but Zoom gained its "fame" thanks to its user-friendly interface and the ability to attract several conference participants.

Despite the numerous advantages of this kind of communication, there are also negative consequences. The main one is cyber terrorism. According to experts in the field of cybersecurity, "Zoom" is the ideal mechanism for "wiretapping" and gaining access to files transmitted in the chat. It is no coincidence that the German Foreign Ministry limited the use of the video service for its employees. A similar step was taken by SpaceX, Tesla and the US space agency NASA.

COVID-19 really influenced the system of international relations and digital diplomacy in general. According to E. Leonov: «In fact, the pandemic was used

⁴⁵ «Zoombombing»: When Video Conferences Go Wrong // The New York Times [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/20/style/zoombombing-zoom-trolling.html> Date of the application: 5.05.2021

⁴⁶ Ibid.

throughout 2020 as a key informational trigger for the publication of negative posts against the target countries. This is the main sign of the transition from “soft power” to “acute” power, the last of which was first implemented during the 2016 presidential election campaign in the United States»⁴⁷.

The American-Chinese experience is indicative in this regard. For example, Donald Trump's regular posts on the official profiles in social networks with statements about the Chinese origin of the pandemic, the apogee of which was the emergence of the concept of "Chinese virus", about the threat of imposing sanctions and the refusal of a trade agreement with China as a "punishment" for allegedly deliberate hiding data greatly agitated the world community. The effect of such "information bombardment" was colossal. In particular, if you analyze hashtags, frequently used words, terms, as well as user reactions to the COVID-19 topic using computer software or ready-made algorithms on the Internet (for example, SocioViz or Netlytic programs), you can trace in most cases negative mention of China in the context of the spread of the virus.

During the pandemic, we observed absolutely unique events, for example: meetings, summits, meetings of heads of state in the online format. G20, G7, EU, ASEAN, EAEU, SCO, etc. It was a historic moment, both for the participants of the online meetings and for the listeners. Naturally, the main topics for discussion was cooperative fight against coronavirus infection. As stated in a statement by members of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council, following the EAEU online summit in 2020: «We call on all states to maintain international cooperation, build confidence, end armed conflicts, trade wars, unilateral financial and economic sanctions and strictly follow the norms of international law.»⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Е.Леонов. Новые тенденции развития цифровой дипломатии в условиях COVID-19 [New trends in the development of digital diplomacy in the context of COVID-19] // The International Affairs magazine web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://interaffairs.ru/jauthor/material/2449> Date of the application: 5.05.2021

⁴⁸ Совместное заявление Членов Высшего Евразийского Экономического Совета в связи с пандемией COVID-19 [Joint Statement of the Members of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic] // [statistic.kremlin.ru](http://static.kremlin.ru/media/events/files/ru/8kG7nZpfEkzHPG2CCzTCO7JiCLvNf34X.pdf) web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <http://static.kremlin.ru/media/events/files/ru/8kG7nZpfEkzHPG2CCzTCO7JiCLvNf34X.pdf> Date of the application: 6.05.2021

Therefore, now diplomatic delegations take part in international consultations and discussions without even leaving their countries. According to well-informed sources at the UN headquarters in Geneva, between March 2020 and the end of the same year, it organized 1,200 online international conferences, which significantly changed the usual standards of diplomacy, given that not all that had to function, worked as it should.⁴⁹

The pandemic will come to an end, but will the format of the meetings return to the previous format? In an article entitled "Can Diplomacy Work Online?" Paola Deda, Director of the Forestry, Land and Housing Division of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), expresses the following thoughts: «Digital technology is very useful for plenary sessions, during which information is exchanged and topics of interest and directly related to people's lives»⁵⁰. But, she said, "making concrete decisions is a completely different story, and when negotiations and exchange of delegations become necessary, online consultations do not seem to make the job of diplomats much easier.»⁵¹

Another interesting fact is the growing importance of international organizations dealing with humanitarian issues, primarily WHO and UNICEF, as well as nongovernmental organizations such as «Médecins sans Frontières». The influence of international financial institutions has significantly increased. It is they who will have to determine the global strategy for dealing with the consequences of the crisis. One of the first questions that will have to be answered after the crisis will be the future of the EU, which failed to respond in time and adequately to the crisis in Italy and Spain. Organizations and forums claiming the role of "world government" - the General Assembly and the UN Security Council, the G7, the

⁴⁹ Digital diplomacy in the era of Covid-19 // swissinfo web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/digital-diplomacy-in-the-era-of-covid-19/46374914> Date of the application: 6.05.2021

⁵⁰ P.Deda. Can Diplomacy Work Online? // UN today web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://untoday.org/can-diplomacy-work-online/> Date of the application: 6.05.2021

⁵¹ Ibid.

economic forum in Davos - will be forced to reconsider their agenda and formulate a new global action plan.

Thus, the new coronavirus infection has in its way contributed to the spread of digital diplomacy. Diplomatic departments and international organizations have shown themselves to be real specialists, quickly adjusting to the realities of the new world.

In the end, institutions have done a great job in digitalization. Due to the pandemic, the countries were forced to move to another level of diplomacy, which influenced the transition to a new level in diplomatic affairs. It is worth noting that both the diplomatic departments and the diplomats themselves today are actively leading a social life, which we can observe every day and draw our own conclusions not through the prism of the media and experts.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is worth noting the fact that digitalization has indeed spread from all spheres of human life, and diplomacy is no exception. An absolutely new format of close interaction between society and diplomatic departments makes modern diplomacy overly public, on the one hand, and less restrained, on the other.

The use of digital technologies in the field of diplomatic activity opens up new opportunities for pursuing a policy of “soft power”, for developing coordinated actions to overcome society's political, social and economic crises, as well as developing measures to prevent them.

Today we are witnessing the development of such a phenomenon as Twiplomacy, which is a sub-level of digital diplomacy. It turns out a whole tree of branches successively emerging from each other, where Twiplomacy turns out to be a thin, young and blossoming shoot. It is mesmerizing, but it can die at any moment. This metaphor personifies the instability of the digital space and its trends, today one thing affects politics and public opinion, tomorrow another.

Despite the fact that many researchers continue to ignore the digital part of life, insisting on its additional reality, that is, not of primary importance in politics, digital diplomacy continues to develop. The main problem remains the inability to measure the influence exerted on the social network, but this is not the fault of social networks, since the influence of public diplomacy is rather abstract. But where can it find an even larger audience for impact, if not on Twitter, for example?

Today, in the implementation of strategic planning, most of the states envisage the improvement of technological tools, the development of science and the expansion of digital resources among the key goals. In particular, actively developing China has developed a special program to maintain the country's title of "world factory", the implementation of which is possible only through the use of technology in the economic development of the state.

The diplomatic presence on social media is not limited to institutional forms of discourse. The emergence of the so-called personified diplomacy of social

networks is due to the fact that in the modern conditions of the information society, a diplomat must necessarily be a strategically targeted processor of public opinion. According to the American diplomat and political scientist S.S. Kinney, a diplomat cannot afford the role of a passive observer, so he needs to be able to independently form the information flow.

As the leading corporations of Silicon Valley emphasize, today there is no longer the need for the services of banks and other commercial organizations that was several decades ago. Thanks to technological progress, managing financial flows is easy and without their assistance. Electronic money, modern ways of storing funds, the possibility of their instant transfer to any part of the world - these are common realities today, which radically change the old picture of the world order. Digital intelligence tools to transform “likes, comments and reposts” into the tasks needed by politicians, exporting democratic ideas to the world, indicate that the phrase “digital soft power” will be understood much more broadly in the future than it is now.

Thus, digital diplomacy is our present and our near future, to which we need to adapt and take advantage of all the benefits. That "One hundred and forty symbols have changed the way we see the world»⁵² said on the official website of Twiplomacy.

⁵² Twiplomacy // Twiplomacy web-site [Electronic resource]. - URL: <https://twiplomacy.com>
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